



Oughton Primary & Nursery School

Mattocke Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2NZ

Tel: 01462 450716 Fax: 01462 431990

Website: www.oughton.herts.sch.uk Email: admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L Clayton

Assistant Headteachers: Mrs E Carroll & Mrs C Phillipson

31st March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you are all well and coping with the current difficult time we are all facing dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Please keep following the Government guidelines to keep everyone in the country safe. Thank you for your continued support over the past few weeks. It was lovely to hear from some of the children that families joined staff and others in praising our NHS and carers through clapping last Thursday night.

As I am sure that you are all aware, we do not know how long this situation is going to continue for. However, I am hopeful that we will be back to school normally by at least June. This would enable our fantastic Year 6 to celebrate in style their last year at Oughton. If this does not happen, please be assured and I have told them this already, we will celebrate them and hold similar events later in the year if we need to.

School at the moment

I thought I would update you all regarding our school. We remain open for a limited number of children who are either children of key workers or vulnerable children. The provision we are providing is not a normal school day. Activities have been planned by Teachers, some of which follow similar to the work given out to the whole year group. However, we have also planned other varied activities to keep the children engaged and active. We have a skeleton staff who provide this provision; often different staff each day. Thank you – many Parents have showed their appreciation of the efforts of the staff at Oughton, who have come into work to provide this service.

Herts Catering continue to provide school dinners for those children who attend school for the day. Children are booked onto this provision each week via ParentMail and meal choices are taken each morning. This meal is free, so please take advantage of this.

Please email us if you have a change of circumstance, we know how difficult life is at the moment and we will always try to accommodate where possible. We will be opening over the Easter break for Key Worker children only; we will not be open Good Friday or Easter Monday. Please book your child via ParentMail by Friday 3rd April by 6pm as we need to plan our staff rota.

Some staff are working from home carrying out tasks such as planning activities – in school and home learning, assessing, leading their curriculum subjects and carrying out training. There is a lot of work going on in the background.

Free School Meals

We have been offering a free packed lunch to children who are eligible for a Free School Meal (FSM) over the past 2 weeks; this is not to be confused with the Universal Free School Meals for all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children. Thank you for the positive comments regarding Herts Catering packed lunches.

You may be aware in the news today that there is a voucher scheme being set up to support FSM families. We have been looking into this over the past two weeks and we aim to use this voucher scheme for our families. We are waiting for details from the Government so we can be ready to implement this after the Easter holidays.

Mrs Channa has been sending out details for you to check if you are eligible for this – please apply if you are. Any questions, please email admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk over the course of this week.

Communication with school

Please be aware that our Office is not staffed each day, so there is often not anyone on the end of the phone.

If you have any queries, please email admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk or info@oughton.herts.sch.uk although be aware that this second email address is only checked daily. Please note, we do not give out individual staff email addresses.

Home learning

Home learning for those children who are at home has been provided by the class teachers via ParentMail. If you do not have access to ParentMail, please email admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk to sort this out. It is vital that we are able to contact all Parents.

Please be aware that this work does not replicate the learning in school. However, we have tried to produce activities that are meaningful and engaging for the children, whilst focusing on key aspects of the curriculum. We are sending work out each week and we have also sent out many websites which will be good to supplement these activities.

We fully understand the difficulties surrounding balancing schoolwork with home life – childcare, Parents working from home and normal daily chores. Equally, we are aware that some families do not have devices such as ipads or computers to complete work. We know that the internet is finding the amount of use around the country a challenge too! So, to help this, some of our activities are not internet based, they can be completed in the books we sent home or on some sheets.

Remember, the most important skills is language – reading with your child is vital; discussing words and key concepts; debating and listening are all important. It is a great time to read to your child, they are never too old for a story! There are many audio free books you can download at the moment.

Some children have a Lexia log in, if they forget their logins – please contact Mrs Channa at admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk and we can send you their details. Well done to some members of Year 5 and 6 who have been using this program regularly. Your teachers and Miss Evans have been checking this regularly.

At Oughton, a key issue is retention. Please recap table facts – Year 2 to 6 have Times Table Rock Stars so please use this! If your child is younger count with them – count anything....count in 2's, count forwards and backwards. Mental arithmetic calculations – adding and takeaway are key skills to practise and challenging for some children so this is vital. Remember, cooking is a great skill; this supports Maths with weighing ingredients (if you are lucky enough to have them in your cupboards) as well as this is a fundamental life skill.

It is important that during the week, you have a routine, which is based on your child's home learning. I understand that for some children, this will be a challenge, however, the quicker a routine is established, the easier it will be to maintain. Weekends – make sure you all have a break!

Thank you, I know that you are all doing your best and I know that learning at home is not easy.

Easter Holidays

This week is the last week of term before the Easter break. Teachers will not be setting home learning for the holidays. The start of the summer term is 20th April and the school will probably remain officially closed at that point. If this is the case, we will continue to support learning at home via ParentMail.

After the Easter break, I anticipate that we will be opening for key worker children and vulnerable children as we are at the present time. If I have any further information for you, I will let you know as soon as I can.

I would like to wish every family a happy Easter. I know it is not going to be a normal Easter holiday, however, we need to make the best of it. Watch films, share chocolate, play games or cards and enjoy being with your loved ones, even if you have to contact them from a far. It is amazing how everyone has improved their technology knowledge over the past few weeks.

Please take care of yourselves and your families, most of all keep safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Clayton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'C'.

Lisa Clayton
Headteacher